

STOCK Act Authors Introduce Legislation to Regulate Political Intelligence and Public Corruption

WASHINGTON—Reps. Tim Walz (MN-01) and Louise Slaughter, Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee (NY-28), long-time authors of the original Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act, today wrote to House and Senate leadership urging them to move forward with a conference committee so that the two bills passed overwhelmingly by the House and Senate could move forward to be signed by the President.

It was two weeks ago today, February 2, that the Senate passed their version of the STOCK Act by a vote of 96-3 and one week ago that the House passed a weakened version of the bill 417-2. Still, no conference committee has been announced.

Today the long-time champions of ending insider trading in Congress and shedding light on the murky political intelligence industry wrote, **“It is imperative that the STOCK Act continues its path through the legislative process without delay in an open and transparent manner to restore the public’s confidence in Congress. We urge you to convene a conference committee and we look forward to working with you to pass the STOCK Act into law.”**

The full letter is included below.

Walz and Slaughter also announced the introduction of the Restore Public Trust Act, H.R. 4054. The legislation would specifically address political intelligence and public corruption, which are the two provisions that were stripped out of the House-passed STOCK Act.

“I commend both the House and Senate for passing the STOCK Act, albeit different versions, in broad, bipartisan fashion. However, there is still more work to be done,” said Walz. “I remind you of those famous words from the Saturday morning cartoon Schoolhouse Rock, the STOCK Act is ‘still just a bill’ that is ‘sitting on Capitol Hill.’ That is why we’re calling on House and Senate Leadership to appoint conferees to hold a transparent conference that will resolve our differences, restore the political intelligence and anti-corruption amendments, and get this bill to the President without further delay.”

“Today, I am joining Congressman Walz to ramp up pressure on leaders of both the House and Senate, by sending them a letter that requests a conference committee so that political intelligence registration and public corruption prosecution language can be restored in the STOCK Act before it is sent to the President’s desk,” said Slaughter. “We are also introducing legislation today that specifically addresses the political intelligence industry and public corruption prosecution improvements. Called the Restore Public Trust Act, we want this legislation to send a loud and clear message that the STOCK Act must go to conference so that these two provisions can be restored in the final version of the bill.”

It was two weeks ago, February 2, that the Senate passed their version of the STOCK Act by a vote of 96-3. And one week ago that the House passed a weakened version of the bill 417-2. Walz and Slaughter have repeatedly called for a Conference Committee between the two houses to complete the bill and send it to President Obama who told the nation in his State of the Union, “Send me a bill that bans insider trading by Members of Congress, and I will sign it tomorrow.”

Walz and Slaughter’s Letter to House and Senate Leadership

February 16, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable
Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable
Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader S-221, The Capitol
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Mitch McConnell Senate Minority Leader
S-321, The Capitol
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear House and Senate Leaders:

As the authors of the Stop Trading On Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act, H.R. 1148, we have spent six years fighting to reform Washington. We write to urge you to convene a conference committee to resolve the differences between the Senate-passed and House-passed versions of the STOCK Act.

With the backing of 286 cosponsors, including 99 Republicans, H.R. 1148 is a comprehensive approach to end the potential for anyone to trade on Congressional material nonpublic information. The Senate moved quickly in an open process on its version of the STOCK Act, S. 2038, passing the legislation with the support of 96 Senators. Both of these strong bills strengthen insider trading prosecution tools, require more timely financial disclosure of Members of Congress and staff and require unregistered political intelligence operatives who sell market moving Congressional information to Wall Street to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA).

We were deeply disappointed that the House amendment to the STOCK Act stripped out the requirement that the political intelligence industry comply with the LDA and a Senate-passed provision that strengthens public corruption enforcement. Ninety-six members of the Senate, 286 members of the House, and the American public support these critical provisions and we urge them to be restored.

It is imperative that the STOCK Act continues its path through the legislative process without delay in an open and transparent manner to restore the public's confidence in Congress. We urge you to convene a conference committee and we look forward to working with you to pass the STOCK Act into law.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter

Tim Walz